On the Asthma.

Asthma

The premonitory signs of ~~this~~ a paroxysm of this disease are lassitude, drowsiness after eating & flatulency, pale Urine, wakefulness ~~& flatulency~~ & cold and dry feet, peevishness, low spirits & a sense of stricture across the breast. I have known one instance in which it was always preceded by sneezing. After the paroxysm is formed, there is great difficulty of breathing; the patient is unable to lie down, but breathes easiest with his head hanging down, and his legs horizontal so as form an acute angle with his body. By this position the dimensions of the thorax are enlarged 20 lines, or nearly an inch and an half. Respiration is quick & attended sometimes with a squeaking noise, and again with a rattling noise, like beans in

attended generally with exacerbations every night.

a dry bladder. Inspiration is sometimes ~~so~~ ~~suddenly~~ performed in a convulsive manner, by which means the glottis is suddenly closed as in eating and drinking. The face is flushed, or pale, and sometimes a little swelled, — the feet are generally cold, and even the breath is sometimes so. A ~~cold~~, ~~and a dry cough~~ & vomiting ~~attend~~ the dry cough ~~sometimes~~ frequently attend it. The heat of the body is seldom increased, and the pulse is generally ~~natural~~ natural, but more & more locked and intermitting. The paroxysm lasts from half an hour to two or three days, and goes off either with a copious expectoration of mucus and phlegm, or without it, ~~and~~ with a moisture upon the skin, warm feet, and an inclination to sleep. But high coloured Urine, the disease sometimes assumes a chronic form, and exists for weeks & months & even years; I ~~have~~ once attended a gentle=man

from the Island of Nevis ~~who had not~~ to whom it fit had existed ~~been known~~ for a whole year, and I have heard of a man who ~~was~~ had passed seven years without once lying down, in consequence of a protracted fit of this disease. In these cases disorganization generally takes place in the lungs, and the disease is for the most part incurable ~~incurable~~, but this is not always the case ~~incurable~~. It was cured in my patient from Nevis ~~at least~~ so far that he was able to sleep in a horizontal posture in his bed, and to enjoy perfect intervals of paroxysms of his disease. ——

I have once seen paroxysms of this disease accompanied with Epilepsy and apoplexy. ——

There is no disease which so exactly resembles the paroxysm of death, as a

It is sometimes a hereditary disease. Now & then it makes its first appearance in Child=-hood and puberty, but more frequently in Adult life or in the evening of life. Its fits occur ~~occur~~ daily, or weekly, or Monthly, or once in four, ten, twenty and thirty years, or but once in the course of a whole life. It occurs in the Spring and Autumn. Oftner than in the Summer & Winter. It sometimes proves fatal in a few years, but there are instances of its having continued fifty years, with=-out destroying life. It continued thirty years in Sir John Floyer during which time he had 36 paroxysms in a year.

It generally attacks in the night, & when the body is in a recumbent posture. The ~~predispos~~ debility which predisposes to this disease according to Dr Cullen as well as =

paroxysm of Asthma. This should always be recollected, lest we should expose our profession by despairing of the recovery of our patients, or by abandoning them in a paroxysm of this disease.

The remote and exciting causes of Asthma, are directly and indirectly upon the lungs. The former are

The Disease itself, is seated chiefly in the bronchial vessels, and hence the absence of fever. It has been divided into dry and humid, or pituitous. The dry is generally attended with a spasm upon the bronchial vessels & is either tonic or clonic, according to the duration of the paroxysm. The dry Asthma occurs most frequently in early and middle life, - the humid, or pituitous occurs chiefly in the decline of life, or after the excitability of the bronchial

Nervous System sympathizes with this disease more than the arterial. But it sometimes brings the latter into ~~the~~ sympathy as well as the former.

vessels is so far worn down away that they cannot assume that form of disease. Sometimes the cessation of the spasmodic Asthma is followed only by a moist cough attended with a copious expectoration of phlegm and mucus in the morning. The V

The remote and exciting causes of Asthma act directly, ~~and~~ and sympathetically indirectly upon the lungs.

The I ~~forms~~ are

1 malconformation of the thorax. This was the cause of the Asthma that ~~[illegible]~~ afflicted the ~~the~~ celebrated Mr Pope during the greatest part of his life.

2 The sensible qualities of the air. Great heat, cold succeeding to heat, ~~and~~ and ~~[illegible]~~ air preterna-turally rare or dense - certain winds induce this disease in different people according to their predispositions. The worst cases of it

V a dense Air induces it in some people & cures it in others. The same thing is true of ~~a rare~~ the ~~Air~~ Atmosphere when pre=
=turnaturally rare.

VI The Asthma is sometimes induced by high and again by low situations. It exists in a City, & not in the Country, & in the Country & not in a City, also ~~on~~ the Seashore and not at a distance from it. In all these cases the sensible & insensible qualities of the Air probably unite in producing and exciting it.

I have ever seen were induced by the uniform heat of Summer. Dry Winds induce it in persons subject to the Spasmodic Asthma, and moist Winds ~~to~~ in persons who are subject to its pituitous form. It was induced for the first time in Mr. Bruce by the ~~Dry~~ Dry Samoon Wind in the Deserts of Nubia. I have a patient in whom the moist East ~~Sea~~ Wind ~~induces~~ ~~it, constantly~~ ~~he~~ induces it. This is so certainly the case, that he can tell at midnight & in his bed when the Wind blows from the East.

3 The insensible qualities of the Air, that is Air impregnated with the Carbonic Acid Gas, Hydrogen gas - metallic fumes, the smoke of tobacco, dust, and even hair powder. ~~4 Transla~~

4 Certain Diseases translated to the lungs particularly the Gout, & cutaneous eruptions. —

The indirect Causes of Asthma are

1 Certain Odors. ~~Thus to~~ It has been induced by fetid ~~smells~~ substances, by strong perfumes, & by the smell of new feathers, & Ipecacuana.

6 Certain Aliments of an indigestible nature. I have known it induced by eating Waffles.

7 Worms, and Wind in the stomach & bowels, also long fasting, & meals at hours not habitual.

2 Pregnancy. It sometimes occurs for the first time in pregnancy, & becomes habitual afterwards, or it occurs only in pregnancy.

3 The Suppression of customary discharges of blood from the Uterus, and hemorrhoidal vessels.

~~10 Gallstones and obstructions in the liver & Spleen. 11 a stone in the kidneys~~

4 Hard running & climbing a hill hastily.

V

III The Sympathetic causes of Asthma are 1 Indigestible aliment. Worms & Wind in the Stomach also long fasting, & meals at unusual hours. Dr. Willis and Riverius have mentioned several cases of Asthma from ~~that causes of the~~ a primary affection of the Stomach. I once saw it induced by eating Waffles.

2 Obstructions in the liver & Spleen & Gall Stones in the biliary ducts.

3 a Stone in the kidneys. an Asthma from this cause is mentioned by Bailleau.

It was ~~produced~~ induced for the first time by running to a fire in One my patients, and in the late Commodore Barry by walking hastily upon a hill at Lisbon.

5th Certain passions of the mind particularly anger.

The Remedies for this Disease divide themselves into three heads.

I Such as are proper in its forming state.

II Such as are proper in its paroxysms, and

III. Such as are proper in its intervals, and calculated to eradicate the System from the System.

I I have already enumerated ~~its pre~~ the premonitary signs of a paroxysm. The remedies in this state of the disease should be the pedi-luvium, Laudanum, Spirit of Hartshorn, mustard to the feet, an emetic, and a prohibition of a recumbent posture of the body. The paroxysm will be more effectually prevented by the patients sitting up all night, if the premonitory

Symptoms should occur in the morning.

II The Remedies proper in a paroxysm of asth-
-ma are

1 Bleeding. The Use of this remedy is indicated by the ~~oppression~~, ~~which always accompanies the dis-~~ difficulty of breathing, and by the blushing and paleness of the face which ac-
-~~cuse~~, and ~~not~~ by the pulse, for as the blood vessels
-companies this disease, sympathizes with
seldom ~~partake of the~~ the bronchial vessels, the pulse is seldom
excited above its natural state. I have long
been in the practice of employing this remedy,
always with advantage. I think I was
the instrument of prolonging ~~by~~ the life of a
certain Robert Porter formerly of this city for near
~~been~~ thirty years by bleeding
him in every paroxysm of his Asthma. ~~to~~ The
Gentleman from Paris who ~~was~~ had not laid
in a bed for a year was relieved by between
30 & 40 bleedings: To these were added an Ab-
-stemious Diet, blisters, Squills & calomel.
~~a bad~~ The disease has lately been completely

eradicated from a lady by small & frequent bleedings. The advantages of it during a fit are 1 It shortens its duration 2 It lessens its violence 3 It prevents those disorganizing obstructions in the lungs which are apt to induce dropsy & pulmonary consumption.

~~Stimulant~~

2 Emetics: These often induce immediate relief, by the action they excite in the stomach. Squills are generally employed for this purpose, but any of the common emetics of the shops will answer nearly as well. The Sulphate of Zinc from its more prompt operation should probably be preferred.

3 Purges should be given to lessen the irritation which arises from costiveness pressing up the bowels against the diaphragm & thus lessening the dimensions of the thorax. They should of the most lenient kind.

by ~~Cool, or cold~~ Cold or Warm air. Many Cases are upon record that shew that both Cold & warm Air relieve a paroxysm of this disease. Sir John Floyer found relief from both. Sir John Hawkins tells Dr. Johnson found relief in the Asthma to which he was subject as soon as he came into a warm room, and sat down by a good fire. I knew an English Merchant in this City who was much afflicted with this Disease who al=ways travelled with a faggot in his carriage in order to obtain a fire promptly in his room, the Warmth of which always gave him immediate ease. Perhaps the benefit he received in this case was derived in part from the rarefaction of the

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air by means of the fire. The relief ob-
-tained from the opposite remedies of cold be
warm air must be ascribed to the different
degrees of morbid action in the lungs.

5 Liquid Laudanum may be given after
depletion with great advantage in small
but repeated doses. It is said to be improved
by the addition of a little of the tincture of
asafoetida to it.

6 The pediluvium.

7 The vapor of boiling water. ~~alone, or united~~
~~with the odor of Cloves, or with~~ It is ren-
-dered more active by the addition of little
mustard, horseradish, or bruised Cloves to
it.

8 Blisters to the wrists. I have often seen
this remedy ~~cure~~ cut short a paroxysm

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of Asthma in a single night when applied at the proper blistering point.

9 Acids. Sir John Floyer found both the vegetable and mineral Acids very useful in a paroxysm of Asthma.

10 Strong Coffee made by added to ℥i of it ℥iv of water. It is highly commended by Sir Jno: Floyer and Sir John Pringle.

11 Smoking tobacco. This has often weak-ened and shortened a fit of Asthma.

12 A Change of situation. ~~Thomas Rob^s Morrison~~ A merchant of this ~~was~~ city R M: who had a Country seat a bout a mile from the city ~~was~~ often afflicted with Asthma, ~~a~~ in the middle of the night. ~~His~~ remedy was to jump out of bed, and ride or walk to his town house in Water Street where he generally found relief, and slept soundly during

V This asthma was of that nature in which the relative gravity of the air as to density, and ~~these airs is most favourable to respiration,~~ rarity affected ~~the air~~ respiration,

for the air in Cities is not affected ~~by its density~~ according to the Barometer for half a day After it ~~is changed~~ the mercury rises or falls in the Country.

the remaining part of the Night. This remedy should not be resorted to until ~~all the~~ most of the remedies that have been mentioned have failed of affording relief. —

III. We come next to speak of the remedies that are proper to be given in the intervals of this disease, and that are calculated to eradicate it from the System. But a question will naturally be asked here is the Asthma a curable disease? — I answer — that it is, & that it has been cured by nature — by accident, by time and by medicine. ~~and by time~~.

It has been cured

1 By pregnancy. Of this I have known an instance in a lady of this city. ~~The disease~~

2 by the Change induced in the female System by the Cessation of the Menses. —

3 by a Change of Occupation, especially if

V ouentions an instance of a Mi=
=litia Colonel who had been much Dis=
=tressed with the Asthma, who was
cured by the severe ~~exercise of mili=~~ duties that were
attached to his military Commission
During the threatened invasion of
England by the Emperor of France.

the patient had been previously exposed by his business to the alternate action of heat & cold, to lifting weights, and to floating particles of offensive matter in the air.

4 by ~~the~~ hardships of a savage life and by severe exercise. A Woman was taken prisoner by the Indians during the last French War in this Country who had been afflicted with the Asthma, and was perfectly cured by living seven years among them in the constant practice of their manner of living, and Dr Bree

5 By new diseases. The Gout has in the limbs has sometimes cured it. The Jaundice cured it in a lady in this city who had been afflicted with it for six years. It has been cured likewise by a spontaneous swelling in one of the legs.

6 a Change of Climate. The efficacy of this remedy has always been influenced by the nature of the Asthma whether it be dry,

V Many persons are relieved in like manner by leaving the neighbourhood of the ~~coly~~ Sea shore, while Others are benefited in an Opposite state of the Disease by removing to it. It is a singular fact that Asthmatic patients are Often relieved by going from Naples to Venice and from Venice to Naples, ~~which~~ It has been said a Voyage to India has Done no Service in it. The reason probably was, the Asthma required a moist Air, for After leaving the ~~shore~~ Western & Eastern shores, the Air on the Atlantic & Indian Oceans is ~~so~~ uncommonly Dry.

or humid. In the former case a moist, in a latter a dry climate has performed the cure. Sir John Floyer could not live out of the moist air of London and we read of an English nobleman who could not live out of the dry air of the Country. The Asthma in each of them was probably of an opposite character. The late Dr Jones lived tolerably free of Asthma after he exchanged the moist air of New York for the Dry air of Philadelphia. A Damp Cave in the Island of Providence to which an Asthmatic patient fled to avoid a heavy flowing of rain enabled him to sleep soundly during the storm, and induced him afterwards to fix a bed there to which he retired every eight for years afterwards for the purpose of obtaining sleep. Dr Reid informs us in his treatise upon the Consumption that there is a passage cut

thro a hill of flint & stone near Henley in Oxfordshire in which Asthmatic patients breathe with perfect ease probably from its being damper than the external air. Dr Percival in his medical Ethics tells us that riding thro Colebrook dale (a place generally filled with the smoke of pit coal) cured a lady of a Asthma. In this case the smoke of the Coal cooperated probably with the moist atmosphere of the valley. It must be admitted however that there are cases in which a change of air has suspended or cured an Asthma; that could not be traced to its dryness or moisture, nor indeed to any of its sensible qualities. what the nature of that matter in the air may be which renders it medicinal

in this Disease I know not. It may be active, and yet its particles like the contagious matters of the small pox & measles be so fine and so minutely divid as to ~~exa~~ elude investigation. If one grain of Copper gave a sensible color to 530,600 times its bulk of Water (according to Mr Boyle) ~~how is it poss~~ let us not be surprised at the immense diffusion & inconceiv-able minuteness of those particles in the air on which its healthy & unhealthy qualities depend. —

Time has sometimes cured this disease without the aid of any of the ~~remedies~~ natural or accidental remedies that have been enumerated. The Cure in these Cases depends upon the changes which time induced in the predisposition. —

Having mentioned the remedies which

have proved successful in the hands of nature, or that have been performed by accidents and time, we proceed next to inquire into means which have been employed for that purpose by medicine. I am aware that Dr Cullen has said that this disease cannot be eradicated by medicine, but I cannot think with him. It has been radically cured by medicine, and if we have not been ~~usually~~ more generally successful in curing it, it must be ascribed to our empirical mode of treating it, that is, prescribing only for its name.

The Remedies for preventing a recurrence of Asthma, and thus eradicating it from the Constitution should be,

1 Small and frequent bleedings. These should

V and by the patients having been pre=
=viously exposed to any other of its remote or
exciting causes.

~~VI This has been most useful where the paroxy=
=ysms have occurred every other day. Per=
=haps an Epidemic intermittent may have
combined with the Asthma in those
cases.~~

~~Tea tablespoonful of mustard taken every
morning, also the constant use of tar,
garlic, and the bit of onion.~~

be regulated not only by the pulse, but by the habits of the patient, by his customary abi=
=ment, by the season of the year by the
current of the winds which usually induce
the disease
it I am persuaded a passenger might of=
=ten be prevented by a regard to these circum=
=stances, and the habit of the disease by those
means be completely broken. The pulse

~~2 Lactucarium~~ an Aloetinicous ~~or Cordial diet suited to the state~~
of the System. I have heard of a case of its being completely
cured by a diet of carrots.
3 ~~By~~ Ulceration in the side, or a perpetual blister
to the ~~[illegible]~~ left arm, or upon one of the legs.
4 The Cold Bath.
5 The Rust of Iron mixed with any aromatic
medicine that ~~[illegible]~~ will help it to lie more
easily upon the stomach. Dr. Bree speaks highly
of this medicine.
6 The Bark. My ~~[illegible]~~ the seven ~~[illegible]~~ last medicines
~~[illegible]~~ should be persevered in for years,
but an increase in this dose will be useful

should be watched with great care, for altho
the disease be not seated in the blood vessels,
or what Dr Cullen calls a turgescence of the blood,
yet a fullness in them often becomes an
exciting cause of a paroxysm of the disease.

2 An Abstemious or Cordial Diet suited to the
state of the System. I have heard of a Case of its
being completely cured by a Diet consisting
exclusively of Carrots.

3 A Seton in the side, or a perpetual blister upon the
left arm or upon one of ~~the~~ legs. In favor
of the application of a perpetual blister to
one ~~of these~~ of the lower extremities, recollect
the accidental cure performed by a swelling
in one of the legs formerly mentioned.

4 The Cold Bath.

5 The rust of Iron mixed with any pleasant
aromatic to make it lie easily upon the stomach.
Dr Bree speaks in high terms of this medicine.

6 The Bark. This is most useful when

the paroxysms occur at regular hours every day, or every other day. Perhaps its efficacy in this case depends upon the Asthma being combined with an epidemic intermittent.

℞ a table spoonful of mustard seed taken every morning.

℞ Tar. ℥. garlic. ʒo the oil of Amber.

The seven last remedies should be persevered in for years in succession & rotation, and the doses of them should al=
=ways be encreased=.

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= a few days before we expect a paroxysm of the disease.

8 Hard Labor. Recollect the accidental Cure performed by this remedy in the Colonel of a Militia regiment. Where Labor will not be submitted to, constant exercise particular= by long journies on horseback, and in bad weather the exercises of ~~rowing~~, quoits, shuttle= =cock ~~&c should be advised~~ and all others that employ the arms should be advised, for these more than walk= =ing, or any other exercise of the lower limbs act powerfully in strengthening the lungs.

9 Sleeping upon a matrass. A lady in this city was much relieved by this remedy. — It renders sleep less profound than a feather bed, and thus keeps up some degree of excitement in the muscles which prevents its being accumulated in

the bronchial vessels of the lungs. The case ~~performed by~~ the woman who passed seven years with the Indians was probably prevented in a great measure by her sleeping upon the base ground. Recollect that the Asthma generally attacks in the night. The stimulus of a hard bed of course cannot fail of having some effect in preventing it. The late Dr Miller supposed he was preserved from the bilious fever in the Delaware state by sleeping constantly upon a sacking bottom during the time of their prevalence every summer fall. These fevers like the Asthma generally make their first attack in the ~~bottom~~ night. But there is another advantage in not suffering a total relaxation of the muscular system upon a feather bed. It imparts constancy to the stimuli that are intended

Disease

3. to obviate, and on this depends in a great degree the benefits of exercise, labor & medicine in ~~curing~~ preventing and curing all diseases. — Of this I mentioned some striking proofs in our Therapeutics. —

to a recurrence to old habits. I knew a lady who ~~had been in the practice of taking snuff~~ was a great snuff taker, who had been cured of ~~an~~ an Asthma by a change induced in ~~the~~ her system by the hand of nature. the ~~left off her~~ laid aside her snuff box from some considerations to which I am a stranger, in consequence of which her Asthma returned. By resuming the use of her snuff her Asthma immediately left her.

14 a Change of Climate suited to the nature of the Disease. ~~and~~ where this is impracticable, a dry Climate may be imitated by a stove room in cool & cold weather, and a moist

One by filling a room with Vapor created by throwing Water upon a heated stone, or by placing a Vessel of Water upon a heated stone. Travellers in the Deserts of Africa we are told cure a temporary Asthma created by the heat & dryness of the Air by constantly holding a Sponge filled with Water to their mouths. Where the Asthma is induced by certain Winds only, a Country should be sought for a perpetual residence in which the Winds blow from a contrary Quarter, or ~~Over a different~~ where they are not impregnated with the matters that produce the ~~noxious~~ Unhealthy Winds.

After all that has been said upon the Subject of Air, Climate, and Winds, it is a fact that we sometimes meet with cases of Asthma that exist independantly of any of them, and return in spite of ~~all these alts~~ circumstances, the most favourable ~~for such a change~~ to their relief from each of them, at

V 15 The diet in this disease should be light. all food difficult of digestion tends to bring on an paroxysm of the disease, from the sympathy of the lungs with the stomach. The meals should likewise be small in order to prevent the pressure of the diaphragm upwards, & thereby contracting the dimensions of the thorax.

* Should all the Remedies that have been ~~recommended~~ mentioned, given in the manner & time that have been recommended fail of curing this disease, they will save the lungs from disorganization, and thus ~~and~~ prolong life, ~~and~~ and lessen the pain and misery ne-cessarily connected with the disease.

customary times. —

V I shall only remark upon each of the Remedies that have been mentioned, that some of them have probably derived their credit from the Asthma going on from the influence of nature, ~~from~~ Accidents & time. It is possible the Cures by some of those remedies may have been the effects of great faith in them, particularly of the more feeble Ones, for it is remarkable that faith in all medicines is often in proportion to their feeble & trifling nature.

Recollect that in this disease more than one System is often affected ~~to~~ & that the Systems must be ~~plumbed~~, before we can expect much ~~benefit~~ benefit from any of ~~our~~ prescriptions for the disease as seated in the bronchial Vessels. ‡

V Where the patient dies in an early paroxysm of the disease. —

Dissections After death show no marks of disease of any kind in recent cases. But where the disease has continued for some time, it ends in pneumony, pulmonary consumption, Dyspnoea, Dropsy of the throat and then in Insanity, all of which when they prove fatal, leave the parts affected in a morbid, or disorganized state. There are instances of its terminating in aneurism near the heart, also a moist cough which continues for many years without destroying life from the causes formerly mentioned. In these cases the bronchial vessels become so much exhausted of their irritability as to be unable to operate the spasm upon which the proximate cause of the disease depended, and the disease shows itself only in a preternatural secretion & excretion of mucus. —